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ABSTRACT

This project compared the degree to which additive and transformational approaches to multicultural education increased children's understanding and appreciation of physically challenged children. The additive approach integrates ethnic content to the regular curriculum by adding content, concepts, themes, and perspectives without changing the basic structure, purposes, and characteristics. The transformation approach challenges the basic assumptions of the curriculum and infuses various perspectives and content from various groups. Participating in this study were 5 second-grade students selected from a class of 27 based on their low level of sensitivity to the physically challenged. Six lesson plans designed to increase awareness of children with special needs were implemented over a 2-week period. Three lessons used an additive approach, integrating books, poetry, and pictures into the curriculum; three used the transformation approach involving activities interacting with physically challenged special education students. Changes in children's sensitivity were based on pre- and post-intervention questionnaires. Findings suggested that the lessons using the additive approach produced minimal change toward a more positive view of physically challenged students. The transformation approach produced more positive responses in the post-intervention measure than did the additive approach. (KB)

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ED 438 938

"A Comparison of the Additive and Transformation Approaches to Multicultural Education"

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Multicultural education is an instructional approach that builds upon the cultural diversity of students (Banks, 1993). This approach considers students' diversity as a valuable educational resource. In this approach children's diversity helps them learn about each other. Multicultural education adds to the existing curriculum, providing all students with a wider portrayal of the contributions made by diverse groups in the formation of the United States (Nieto, 1996).

Through multicultural education children develop the social skills necessary for an understanding and empathy towards a wide diversity of people, social class, language, sexual orientation, and physical ability. Multicultural education, therefore, is a process that validates and incorporates the varied ways of knowing into classrooms.

The purpose of this teacher action research was to examine the degree to which two multicultural education approaches (additive and transformational) increases understanding and appreciation among general education students of physically challenged children in a second grade classroom. The following research questions drove the study: (a) To what degree do seven-year-olds change the way they think about children who are physically challenged after participating in a multicultural curriculum utilizing an additive approach? (b) To what degree do seven-year olds change the way they think about children who are physically disabled after participating in a multicultural lesson utilizing a

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transformation approach? (c) In utilizing a transformation or additive approach, are there any differences/likenesses in the degree to which either approach facilitates change?

The additive approach is an approach that integrates ethnic content to the curriculum by adding content, concepts, themes, and perspectives to the curriculum without changing its basic structure, purposes, and characteristics. The additive approach is often accomplished by the addition of a book, a unit, or a course of the curriculum without changing it substantially (Banks, 1995).

The transformation approach differs fundamentally from the additive approach. This approach changes the basic assumptions of the curriculum and enables students to view concepts, issues, themes, and problems from several ethnic perspectives and points of view. The main curriculum issue involved in the transformation approach is not the addition of ethnic groups, contributions, and heroes, but the infusion of various perspectives, and content from various groups that will extend students understanding. (Banks 1995).

Methods/Subjects

Out of a class of 27 general education students, only five students were selected for this study. These five students were chosen due to their level of sensitivity to the physically challenged. All children participated in a read aloud. The name of the book read was the "Wish" by John Billos. This story is about a young boy who is bound by a wheelchair. The boy wishes to do the things that other students in the school are capable of doing. Then, after reading and

discussing the book, the students were asked to write a reaction paper to the story.

After reading and examining the papers of each and every student in the classroom, the general education classroom teacher chose five papers that showed the least sensitivity towards the wheelchair bound child in the story.

The subjects were comprised of five general education 7 year olds, who are of different ethnic backgrounds in the second grade. A pre and post questionnaire was administered to the five children by the teacher prior and after the study's lessons. The questionnaire included five questions that focused on the degree to which 5 selected children viewed the physically challenged. The questions of the pre-post questionnaire were (a) how do you feel about children with special needs? (b) Do you think drawing shapes are easy for a physically challenged person as it is for you? (c) How are physically challenged children different from you? (d) Can physically challenged children play outdoors like you? If so, how? and (e) If a physically challenged children were in our class, how can you make it easier for them to be more independent?

Three lesson plans were implemented using the additive approach and three lesson plans were implemented using the transformation approach. The lesson plans were designed to develop an awareness of children with special needs. The lessons were administered over a course of two weeks as an added section to the primary curriculum. During the activity an on going assessment was taken to measure the degree in which their views were changing. A variety of teaching strategies such as, readings, poetry, art, special education inclusion and

gym were delivered to promote sensitivity and awareness of physically challenged children.

The data were analyzed with a comparison of pre/post test results and indicated by frequency counts. Children's responses to the pre and post questionnaire were noted and coded as a negative or positive with regard to sensitivity towards special needs children

Findings

Research Question

1. To what degree do seven-year-olds change the way they think about children who are physically challenged after participating in a multicultural lesson utilizing an additive approach?

Table #1:
A comparison of Pre and Post seven year olds thinking of physically impaired children when instructed through an Additive approach.

Area	Pre -	Pre +	Post -	Post +	
Thinking about children with special needs	4	1	3	2	
Motor Skills	5	0	4	1	
View of Difference	4	1	3	2	
Gross Motor Skills	5	0	4	1	
Independence	5	0	5	0	
Total	23	2	19	6	

Key: + equals more sensitive - equals less sensitive

Five students participated in three additive approach lesson plans. The first additive lesson was a visual observation of physically challenged children's facial expression. The students had to interpret the expression and explain what caused their unhappiness. If it was due to their physical disability or their given

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situation. Three students thought that the unhappiness of the children in the picture was caused by their disability and two students thought it was caused by their given situation.

The second additive lesson was a read to. The students had to identify and compare the character's traits of the physically challenged children in the story to themselves. It was amazing how they sat attentively through the entire reading. The students were absorbed, and had a better understanding of what the lesson represented. The students took turns in acting out the text of what they think a physically challenged student is capable of doing or what their limitations are. When the students charted their responses, surprisingly only one student felt positive that physically challenged students can partake in a variety of activities. The other four students could not visualize the physically challenged active in the sense of going swimming, playing video games or playing baseball.

The third additive lesson, children listened to poetry. Students were told in advance to listen and observe the mood of the poem. The name of the poem is "I Can". The students were to keep in mind the message and meaning of the poem and what the poem would mean to a person that is physically challenged. In viewing the Additive Approach pre questions it is evident that 23 questions displayed less sensitivity towards the physically challenged as supposed to only 2 questions displaying sensitivity. In comparing the pre to the post questions, student's view changed slightly. Their negative views decreased to a total of 19 and the postpositive increased to a total of 6. As a whole the additive approach

had minimal impact in changing their children's views towards students that are physically challenged.

2. To what degree do seven-year-olds change the way they think about children who are physically challenged after participating in a multicultural lesson utilizing a transformation approach?

Table #2:
A comparison of Pre and Post seven year old thinking of physically impaired children when instructed through a Transformation approach.

Area	Pre -	Pre +	Post -	Post +
Thinking about children with special needs	3	2	1	4
Motor Skills	4	1	0	5
View of Difference	3	2	2	3
Gross Motor Skills	4	1	1	4
Independence	5	0	0	5
Total	18	7	4	21

Key: + equals more sensitive - equals less sensitive

The same five students participated in the transformation approach lessons. The forth to the sixth lessons were inclusive. The general education students were waiting with anticipation. Even though they shared the same lunch hour, and their classrooms were right next door, they never interacted before. The children were brought into the special education classroom. The children introduced themselves. A special education and general education student paired up. The special education teacher gave them a brief history about each child's disability and allowed each general education student try out the special education student's device. This lesson was viewed as a very positive one. After the exposure to the special education students, the entire general education

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students thought that they were cool! This lesson was a beginning in sensitizing the students to the physically challenged.

The fifth transformation lesson was also inclusive and consisted of an art activity. The general education students wanted to return to see their friends in special education. The general education students walked right in and sat with their previous partners from the day before. The students were asked to draw pictures of themselves, family, and friends. The children had a great time; there was a great deal of discussion and interacting going on. Mutual sharing and positive feedback among students was observed. The general education students were amazed that the physically challenged students were able to draw just as good as them or even better. One of the special education students drew a picture of him and his family playing basketball and challenged one of the general education students to a game! By the time the inclusion session was over the general education students were amazed at how talented and self centered some of the students were.

This lesson also increased the general education students' sensitivity towards the physically challenged.

The sixth and final lesson also included an inclusion activity, however in the gym. Both classes met in the gym, and the students were allowed to choose their own team. It was nice to see that the teams were diverse. The students shot hoops and the teacher kept score. Even though the game did not have the same interaction as playing basketball, the students still expressed the same excitement, eagerness and anticipation throughout the game. Each team member had an

incredible amount of fun! This lesson was the most incredible and positive interaction among both classes. They displayed sensitivity and compassion throughout the entire time.

In viewing the transformation approach chart, there are a total of 18 pre-negative questions t sensitivity toward the physically challenged.

In comparing both charts, the additive and the transformation approaches, it is evident that the transformation produced more positive responses in the post measure.

3. In utilizing a transformation and additive approach, are there any differences/likeness in the degree to which either approach facilitates change?

Table #3:
Differences and Likeness in the Degree to Which Either Approach Facilitates Change.

Approach	Additive		Transformation	
Area	Post -	Post +	Post -	Post +
Thinking about children with special needs	4	1	1	4
Motor Skills	4	1	0	5
View of Difference	3	2	2	3
Gross Motor Skills	4	1	1	4
Independence	5	0	0	5
Total	19	6	4	21

Key: + equals more sensitivity -equals less sensitive

In viewing the chart and comparing the figures, it is obvious the additive approach produced 15 more negative post responses than the transformation approach, which produced only 4. When comparing the postpositive, the

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transformation approach produced a larger number of positive responses. The transformation approach produced 15 positive responses and the additive approach produced 6.

There is most definitely a difference between the two approaches and how each one facilitates change. For one, with the additive approach only books, poetry and pictures were integrated to the curriculum, without changing its' basic structure. However, with the transformation approach the students were able to interact with the physically challenged students. This inclusion served as a positive resource for their learning and increased sensitivity towards students that are physically challenged.

Conclusion

The specific purpose of this research was to measure the degree to which 5 seven-year-olds change the way in which they view children with physical disabilities, as a result of participating in 6 multicultural lessons utilizing both an additive and a transformation approach.

The additive approach has many disadvantages. It is considered to be a shortcoming because most children on the second grade level need more than a visual and mental picture to change perceptions. The additive approach also failed to increase sensitivity towards physically challenged children.

The transformation approach changed the basic assumptions of the curriculum and enabled students to view concepts, issues, and problems from

several perspectives and points of view. The key curriculum issue involved in the transformation approach is not the long list of contributions but the infusion of various perspectives and content from various groups that extend students' understandings of the nature, development and complexities of our society.

There was a greater increase in sensitivity towards physically challenged children as a result of the transformation approach. The students were very enthusiastic during the transformation lessons. Both groups worked cooperatively, filling the room with excitement and high self-esteem.

Multicultural education contributions should be integrated into all subjects and every classroom. It should begin in pre-k and extend throughout high school. It is crucial for teachers/parents to educate the student population in order to help them gain a better perspective and respect for diversity. More inclusion should be advocated between the general education and the special education classes with hope to sensitize general education students to students that are physically challenged. Teachers in all grades should implement transformational approaches to multicultural education. This should begin early in the school year to allow students to view and develop a greater awareness of our diverse society.

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